

# Minutes for Vanderbilt University Faculty Senate April 8, 2021 Meeting

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## Attendees

Voting members in attendance: Sari Acra, Adam Anderson, Dan Barocas, Leon Bellan, Camilla Benbow, Dietmar Bisch, James Booth, Brett Byram, Lorenzo Candelaria, Liz Catania, Leena Choi, Lourdes Estrada, Philippe Fauchet, Leonard Folgarait, Debra Friedman, Katherine Friedman, John Geer, Chris Guthrie, Alissa Hare, Ben Harris, Katherine Hartmann, Graham Hemingway, Brian Heuser, Dawn Iacobucci, Eric Johnson, Lutz Koepnick, Susie Leming-Lee, David Lewis, Chris Lind, William Luis, Cindy Kam, Mark Magnuson, Larry Marnett, Catherine McTamane, Ryan Middagh, Robert Miller, Vicky Morgan, Linda Norman, Abby Parish, Julia Phillippi, Courtney Pitts, Lynn Ramey, Florence Sanchez, Berk Sensoy, Tracy Sharpley-Whiting, Marcy Singer-Gabella, Rebecca Swan, Emilie Townes, Jonathan Waters, Saralyn Williams, and Eli Zimmerman.

Voting members absent: Victor Anderson, Celia Applegate, Carolyn Audet, Brian Bachmann, Karen Bloch, André Christie-Mizell, Mario Crucini, Elsa Filosa, Eric Grogan, James Hudnut-Beumler, Jami Miller, Josh Murray, Sandra Rosenthal, Greg Walker and Yesha Yadav.

Ex-officio members in attendance: Mark Bandas, Don Brady, Doug Christianson, Andre Churchwell, Daniel Diermeier, Steve Ertel, Tracey George, Anders Hall, Eric Kopstain, John Lutz, John McLean, Ann Price, Padma Raghavan, Dave Raiford, William Robinson, Ruby Shellaway, Brett Sweet, and Susan Wentz.

Ex-officio members absent: Holly Algood, Vanessa Beasley, Valerie Hotchkiss, Nathan Green, Candice Lee, Laura Nairon and Jennifer Pietenpol.

Guests in attendance: Jessica Brotherson, Derek Bruff, Hannah Burns, Bapsi Chakravar, Angelica Hooten, Paul Laibinis, Ken McLeish, Melanie Moran, Linda Sealy, Veer Shah, Sheree Wright, and Enxia Zhang.

## Call to Order

A meeting of Vanderbilt Faculty Senate was held on April 8, 2021 on Zoom. It began at 4.10pm and was presided over by Chair Catherine McTamane, with Vice Chair Ben Harris as secretary.

Quorum as specified in the Faculty Senate Constitution (revised 4/5/2019) Article II.B.1. was met with the recorded attendance at 4:10 pm of 31 voting members of the Faculty Senate.

## Approval of Minutes

Chair McTamane motioned for approval of the minutes as circulated of the March 4, 2021 meeting. Chair McTamane asked whether there were any corrections to the proposed minutes. No corrections were made.

Vice Chair Harris confirmed that the minutes stood approved (37 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstained).

Chair McTamane proceeded to the next item of business.

## Guest remarks

Chair McTamaneý proposed a motion to suspend the rules to allow guest speakers speak out of order. The motion was moved and seconded. Chair McTamaneý requested a voice vote on this motion. The motion to suspend the Rules passed by a unanimous consent.

President of the Student Body Veer Shah and incoming Student Body President Elect Hannah Bruns were invited from the waiting room. Chair McTamaneý congratulated Hannah Bruns and Vice President Elect Kayla Prowell on their election who are also the first all-black ticket elected to these positions at Vanderbilt.

Chair McTamaneý turned the floor over to Veer Shah.

## Vanderbilt Student Government Reports

Veer Shah presented initiatives achieved in 2020-2021.

1. Committee.

*Expanded Graduate school application and assistance fund* (it started as a \$10,000 fund but with the help of Provost Wenté it expanded to \$20,000 fund). It is a fund where students can apply for \$250 grants toward anything related to post graduate opportunities.

*Pushed/expanded yearlong pop-up thrift shop*

2. Senate

*Created Leadership election workshops to increase transparency and representation in undergraduate Senate.* Hosted first ever leadership development workshops where students were taught how to run Senate elections as well as student body presidential elections.

3. Cabinet

*Created Partnership with University Communication for COVID-19 and University projects.* It included creating guidelines to encourage students follow them both in the classroom and outside. It was a successful partnership with many students were featured on Instagram which further increased COVID-19 guidelines participation.

*Increased Headspace meditation access membership to all students.* It is a popular app promoting mindfulness meditations. Last year memberships were given to 20% of student body and this year it was extended to every student.

Hannah Bruns presented plans for 2021-2022.

1. Have more student voice in faculty selections.
2. Support student organizations in their endeavors to create new majors and minors and study centers.
3. Advocate for fossil fuels divestment and reinvestment in clean energy.
4. Advocate for possibly renaming buildings) on campus to create more inclusive environment.

5. Require a cultural studies class through AXLE (Achieving Excellence in Liberal Education).

Chair McTamanev thanked Veer and Hannah as well as Student Life Chairs, Professors Hare and Parish, for their behind the scenes work with students this academic year. Veer and Hannah logged off.

Chair McTamanev proceeded to the next item of business.

### **Report of the Executive Committee**

Chair McTamanev shared that a written report of the executive committee was distributed earlier in the day in email. Chair McTamanev reminded senators that the year-end reports will be presented in the final senate meeting on May 6.

Chair McTamanev proceeded to the next item of business.

### **Chancellor Remarks**

Chair McTamanev turned the floor over to Chancellor Diermeier.

Chancellor Diermeier remarked:

- COVID update. Need continued vigilance as we have heard our peers like Duke and University of Chicago going into lockdown.
- Commencement being held in person with separate commencement events for the class of 2020 and the class of 2021. Planning going well with complex logistics and two events within two weeks of each other. Tremendous efforts are being put into the planning which includes work from Provost Wenthe, Vice Chancellor Kopstain, and Dean Norman.
- Admissions season has shown a record number of applicants thanks to the work of Doug Christianson. Seeing a tremendous group of incoming students with excellent credentials, different perspectives, and diversity. Professional school applications also looking very strong.
- Highlighted two agenda items:
  - Asian Americans and of Asian descent- recent shootings and racist activity, university is working on it starting with meetings with faculty last week and students in the coming week. Faculty are deeply unsettled. There has also been an impact on hiring where an accepted employee was offered employment and turned it down. Concerned and having discussions on how to support the students and faculty. That Vanderbilt might be seen as not hospitable is very concerning and taking action. Serious situation that needs to be tackled and addressed on a variety of levels. Have been in listening mode to better understand the situation and how to address on a variety of levels.
  - Investment in Athletics- Vandy United Fund Athletics initiative recently announced. A large 300M investment, particularly on facilities side. (1/3 comes from university and 2/3 from donations, 1/3 (\$100M) already raised and need to raise another \$100M). Rationale is that we have a lot of people on the sidelines not participating and getting engagement. Significantly underinvested in in facilities. Need to invest for the benefit of both athletes and fans which address the business piece. The platform through athletics

is highly visible with athletes like Sarah Fuller with 2 billion social media clicks. She was picked to introduce Vice President Kamala Harris because she is a trailblazer. Have a large platform and need to use it right and in a bold way. It will provide visibility for Vanderbilt but must be done in a way that puts the students and athletes first. Must be done right and consistent with Vanderbilt's values.

No questions were asked and Chair McTamane proceeded to the next item of business.

### Standing Committee Reports

There were no standing committee reports.

Chair McTamane proceeded to the next item of business.

### Old Business

There was no old business.

Chair McTamane proceeded to the next item of business.

### New Business

Chair McTamane commended EDI committee for their extraordinary work over the year and turned the floor to co-chairs William Luis and Sari Acra to introduce four resolutions. Co-chair Acra thanked the DEI committee and executive committee for their contributions and support of the efforts.

Co-chair Acra presented **Motion 1** for the DEI committee:

#### **PROPOSED: A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING ACADEMIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND CIVILITY IN THE CONSIDERATION OF VANDERBILT'S HISTORY**

WHEREAS Vanderbilt University is dedicated to advancing knowledge and ideas, both of which may contain inherently value-laden components and

WHEREAS in pursuit of this goal, Vanderbilt is committed to providing an environment for open inquiry and vigorous exploration and free expression of ideas and

WHEREAS academic freedom for faculty extends from the university campus (e.g., classrooms, lecture halls, clubs, etc.) to outside its boundaries and is recognized as an important component of academic endeavor and

WHEREAS Vanderbilt encourages intellectual inquiry, discovery, and exchange of information, and therefore, fully recognizes and protects freedom of exploration, thought, and expression for its faculty in all these activities and

WHEREAS the university deeply values inclusivity, civility, and mutual respect, and is and should be a forum in which faculty and students engage the spectrum of ideas in a civil and mutually respectful fashion, where faculty provide a role model for student engagement, and where students hone their abilities to think about and explore diverse perspectives and

WHEREAS discouragement of personal vilification includes education and assistance in understanding the differing cultures represented through engaging members of our diverse community in open dialogue that offers all points of view and the opportunity to be heard

**Be it resolved:**

The Vanderbilt University Faculty Senate is committed to an open and civil discussion of all aspects of the University's history, both straightforward and complex.

DEI Committee:

Sari Acra Co-chair

William Luis Co-chair

Victor Anderson

Adriana Bialostozky

Franklin Ellis Jr.

Lourdes Estrada

Stacey Floyd-Thomas

Ben Harris

Susie Leming-Lee

LeTizia Smith

Christopher Lind

Rolanda Lister

Jonathan Waters

William Robinson

Chair McTamaneý indicated that the motion was brought forward by a committee and that it does not require a second. She opened the floor for debate.

Chancellor Diermeier shared that he felt this is a great motion and the committee should be proud of this.

One question was raised about the implications for speech outside of the University (i.e., if faculty member is interviewed in the press, identified as Vanderbilt faculty member). Chancellor answered that when a faculty member speaks to the media they do so as an independent member, not as faculty.

Chair McTamanev called for the vote and voting members were sent to breakout rooms to vote.

Chair McTamanev asked Vice Chair Harris to share the results of the vote. Vice Chair Harris indicated that the motion carried. (Vote tally: 40 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstain)

Chair McTamanev passed the floor back to Co-chair Luis who presented Motion 2 for the DEI committee.

**Motion 2:**

**PROPOSED: A RESOLUTION TO AFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO UNDERSTAND THE HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN THE HISTORY OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY**

WHEREAS Vanderbilt University is dedicated to advancing knowledge as a part of its core mission and

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate in a prior declaration has acknowledged the value of inclusivity, civility and protects freedom of exploration and inquiry

WHEREAS it is part of the University's mission to disseminate knowledge of Native peoples and their relation to the institution's history, including Vanderbilt University's location on ancestral hunting and traditional lands of Indigenous communities and

WHEREAS it is part of its inquiry and mission to disseminate knowledge of its history and the facts upon which this history is framed and discussed and

WHEREAS in its mission, the University commits itself to support and encourage the need to factually determine the history of Indigenous people who inhabited the land upon which the University was founded.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate recognizes the importance of studying and understanding the history and facts of the Native peoples who lived on this land, and their roles in the history of this University.

Be it resolved:

The Vanderbilt Faculty Senate recommends that the University study the history of the Native peoples associated with the land on which Vanderbilt is located, and incorporate that history into the official history of the University and its land, as well as the equity, diversity, and inclusion activities of the University.

DEI Committee :

Sari Acra Co-chair

William Luis Co-chair

Victor Anderson

Adriana Bialostozky

Franklin Ellis Jr.

Lourdes Estrada

Stacey Floyd-Thomas

Ben Harris

Susie Leming-Lee

LeTizia Smith

Christopher Lind

Rolanda Lister

Jonathan Waters

William Robinson

Chair McTamanev indicated that the motion was brought forward by a committee and that it does not require a second. She opened the floor for debate.

Chancellor reiterated that this is another well-crafted motion to allow to engage in a scholarly way and a great way to move forward and advance.

A senator asked whether Vanderbilt has been in dialogue with Native community about the land that Vanderbilt might sit on or is this based on the conscience of students? Co-chair Acra shared that he is open to meet with groups of Indigenous peoples and has been in touch with them but those have not yet been acted on.

Chair McTamanev called for the vote and voting members were sent to breakout rooms to vote.

Chair McTamanev asked Vice Chair Harris to share the results of the motion. Vice Chair Harris indicated that the motion carried. (Vote tally: 38 ayes, 3 nays, 1 abstain)

Chair McTamanev passed the floor back to Co-chair Luis who presented Motion 3 for the DEI committee.

**Motion 3:**

**A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ATTACKS ON THE ASIAN, ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITIES AND AFFIRMING THE SENATE'S STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.**

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate has adopted a statement of principles that affirms the University's commitment, "to foster an open and diverse society where the rights of all members of the community are respected," and

WHEREAS the Senate's statement of principles discourages, "personal vilification," and calls for, "education and assistance in understanding the differing cultures represented at Vanderbilt, peer disapproval of inconsiderate behavior, and provisions of the Student Handbook regulating abusive or harassing conduct," and

WHEREAS local, regional and national events targeting members of the Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, warrant an affirmation of these principles,

**Be it resolved:**

DEI Committee of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate join the Vanderbilt Administration in recognizing how recent violence and attacks on our neighbors in Atlanta, deeply affected members of our Vanderbilt community. We, too, condemn racism, sexism, xenophobia, and expressions of hate, bias and discrimination in all forms.

DEI Committee:

Sari Acra Co-chair

William Luis Co-chair

Victor Anderson

Adriana Bialostozky

Franklin Ellis Jr.

Lourdes Estrada

Stacey Floyd-Thomas

Ben Harris

Susie Leming-Lee

LeTizia Smith

Christopher Lind

Rolanda Lister

Jonathan Waters

William Robinson

Chair McTamanev indicated that the motion was brought forward by a committee and that it does not require a second. She opened the floor for debate.

The Chancellor thinks it is very important that the faculty is making this statement.

A senator questioned the word in 'therefore be it resolved' and noted that the attacks have gone beyond Atlanta since that event and wondered whether the language can be not solely specific to Atlanta.

Senator Freedman proposed a motion to amend to strike out the words '**how violence and attacks on our neighbors in Atlanta**' and insert words '**in recent and ongoing violence and marginalization of Asians and Asian Americans and communities, including institutions of higher education**'. There was a second. Chair McTamanev stated that it was moved and seconded to strike out the words 'how violence and attacks on our neighbors in Atlanta' and insert the words 'in recent and ongoing violence and marginalization of Asians and Asian Americans and communities, including institutions of higher education'.

Chair McTamanev opened the floor for further debate on Senator Friedman's motion to amend Motion 3. Amendment received a second to adopt the motion to amend.

Voting Senators were moved to a breakout room to vote anonymously on the proposed amendment to Motion 3. Chair McTamanev noted that if the amendment motion carries, Motion 3 will now read 'how violence and attacks on our neighbors in Atlanta' and insert the words 'in recent and ongoing violence and marginalization of Asians and Asian Americans and communities, including institutions of higher education'. Vice Chair Harris confirmed that the amended motion passed unanimously.

Chair McTamanev opened the floor for discussion of the newly amended motion. There was no further discussion.

Voting senators were sent to a breakout room to anonymously vote and Vice Chair Harris confirmed that the newly amended Motion 3 carried. (Vote tally: 41 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstain)

Chair McTamanev turned the floor to co-chair Acra to introduce Motion 4.

Co-chair of the DEI committee, Senator Acra next introduced the committee's Motion 4:

#### **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LATINX IDENTITY CENTER**

WHEREAS increasingly, the student, trainee, staff, and faculty bodies at Vanderbilt University reflect the diversity of the communities the University serves and

WHEREAS to promote the goals of diversity and inclusion that the University espouses, demonstrate institutional support and commitment, and attract or retain representation from the various

communities that compose the fabric of our nation, it is important to address the academic, cultural, well-being, and social needs of the communities the University is serving or hopes to serve, and to promote cross-cultural dialogue and understanding among various constituencies and

WHEREAS the few established Cultural Identity Centers on the Vanderbilt Campus (e.g. Women's, Black, Jewish, LGBTQ) have been recognized as essential resources for Vanderbilt University and the greater Nashville community to promote culture, history, and greater cultural understanding, and highlight accomplishments, allyship, and appreciation for equity, diversity, and inclusion and

WHEREAS identity centers promise to integrate spaces on campus for students, faculty, administrators, and staff of historically underrepresented or marginalized communities where students feel safe and valued, receive services that meet their individual needs, as well as celebrate and welcome differences into the University community, and help promote solutions to shared challenges and

WHEREAS while there has been palpable progress, many of the communities that together constitute Vanderbilt University and the communities from which Vanderbilt hopes to attract students, faculty, and staff are not supported by existing identity centers and

WHEREAS the Latinx community represents the largest such community and is deserving of the dedicated support afforded by such centers.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports the establishment of a Latinx Cultural Identity Center to enhance the Vanderbilt experience of Latinx students, faculty, and staff and other members of the Vanderbilt community by providing effective programming and resources to address the academic, cultural, well-being, and social needs of the community and

**Be it resolved:**

The Vanderbilt Faculty Senate encourages the prompt assessment of need for additional identity centers to support underrepresented peoples, including Asian, Indigenous, people with disabilities and others.

DEI Committee:

Sari Acra Co-chair

William Luis Co-chair

Victor Anderson

Adriana Bialostozky

Franklin Ellis Jr.

Lourdes Estrada

Stacey Floyd-Thomas

Ben Harris

Susie Leming-Lee

LeTizia Smith

Christopher Lind

Rolanda Lister

Jonathan Waters

William Robinson

Chair McTamanev indicated that the motion was brought forward by a committee and that it does not require a second. She opened the floor for debate.

Chancellor asked a question of the committee; 1. What is the evidence that these centers create a sense of belonging? 2. How do we think in the future, the number of identity centers that there could be? 3. How do we deal with intersectionality?

DEI Committee Co-chair Luis responded that peer universities have set up such centers and they were successful in promoting students' sense of belonging. Considering that by mid-century Hispanic Latinx population will constitute 30% of student population if not more, this is a way of recognizing this group of people and the knowledge and investments that they can bring to Vanderbilt. This is a way of showing that Vanderbilt is willing to make an investment to make Latinx community feel comfortable at Vanderbilt.

Seeing no further debate, Chair McTamanev called for a vote on Motion 4 as presented by the DEI committee. Voting senators were moved into a breakout room to vote anonymously on the proposed motion.

Vice Chair Harris confirmed that Motion 4 carried. (Tally: 28 ayes, 11 nays, 2 abstains)

Chair McTamanev proceeded to the next item of business.

### **Scheduled Remarks**

Derek Bruff, Director, Center for Teaching; Interim Director, Digital Commons and Principal Senior Lecturer, Mathematics.

- Introduced current team for the Center for Teaching. Have added new positions in the last year and hiring additional positions to support Brightspace.

- Faculty Programs. Two online course design classes being held May 17-21 (Online Course Design Institute) and May 24-27 (Course Design Institute: Inclusive Teaching).
- Will continue with Teaching Workshops and Conversations on Learning series.
- CFT is also home for Educational Technologies; Brightspace support, Turnitin, Kaltura, Top Hat, Gradescope, GoReact, Proctorio, and Perusall.
- Launched Digital Media Services in the Baker Building, One Button Studio, Digital Media Lab coming in fall 2021.
- On-Demand Resources available on website
- Cft.vanderbilt.edu email [cft@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:cft@vanderbilt.edu) Twitter: @vandycft Facebook: @vandycft
- Now acting as the new Interim Director of the Digital Commons starting Fall 2021
- Mission of Digital Commons is to equip Vanderbilt faculty with the skills they need to use digital technologies in their research and teaching.
- Partners, Vanderbilt Libraries, CFT, and Center for Digital Humanities

Chair turned the floor over to Ruza Shellaway.

Ruza Shellaway, Vice Chancellor, General Counsel and University Secretary.

- Vice Chancellor Shellaway provided updates on the Conflict-of-Interest Policy Revisions and that there will be a listening session on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 4:10pm on zoom. Registration was provided at [this link](#). This event is open to all faculty.
- Requires stakeholders from all parts of the university including faculty and the Faculty Senate. Seeking feedback on potential changes which were previously recommended by Faculty Senate prior to COVID.
- Changes were also recommended by Audit, Risk and Compliance, the NIH, and other federal agencies.
- This will be the first new system update in 15 years and more like current used systems and a cleaner user experience.

Chair McTamane proceeded to the next item of business.

## Good of the Senate

Chair McTamane opened the floor to comments.

- Elected senator breakout session took place.
- April 22 COI Policy Updates Listening session
- May 6 meeting; final meeting to be held which will include year-end committee reports.

- Thomas Jefferson Award nominations are open, and faculty can submit their nominations or reach out to Chair Elect Magnuson or Vice Chair Elect Middagh.

## Adjournment

Chair McTamanev ask if there was a motion to adjourn. It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. There was a second and the meeting adjourned at 5.48pm.



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[Ben Harris, Secretary]  
Faculty Senate Vice Chair

May 6, 2021

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Date of Approval